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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 003121

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [ETRD](#) [SR](#) [SY](#) [UP](#) [YI](#) [NL](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/EU: APPROACHING THE DUTCH IN ADVANCE
OF THE NOVEMBER 21 FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING (GAERC)

REF: SECSTATE 208899

Classified By: Acting DCM Andrew J. Schofer for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[11](#). (C) SUMMARY. During the November 21-22 GAERC, the Dutch will advocate for a "non-binding regime for civ-mil coordination" that favors development of national capacities and express concern on Iran. While the Dutch are proud of EU involvement in the Iraqi elections, they do not advocate for an EU election observer mission to Iraq. The Dutch are pleased with the Rafah border crossing agreement but are uncertain how they can best be of assistance in the Middle East Peace Process. They are "not optimistic" for a favorable outcome from WTO discussions in Hong Kong. END SUMMARY.

[12](#). (C) On November 17, POLOFF presented points to Bahia Tahzib-Lie (Deputy European Correspondent, MFA). Tahzib-Lie expressed gratitude for the points and promised to take them under consideration in preparation for the upcoming GAERC. The same day, POLOFF discussed the Dutch's views on issues to be discussed at the GAERC with Tahzib-Lie and Derk Oldenburg (Deputy Director, European Integration Department, MFA).

DEFENSE ISSUES

[13](#). (C) Dutch counterparts shared their predictions of what may emerge from discussions between Foreign and Defense Ministers on November 21. Of particular interest to the Dutch will be discussion of the 2006 budget for the European Defense Agency (EDA). The Dutch are hesitant to increase the EDA budget. Tahzib-Lie explained that the Dutch advocate for a "non-binding European regime for civ-mil coordination" that favors development of national capacities. Tahzib-Lie expected the GAERC also to address security sector reform. Oldenburg acknowledged that expanding the EU's military capabilities "takes part of the NATO toolbox," but refrained from positing on whether NATO-EU coordination would be addressed in depth by Ministers.

IRAQ/IRAN

[14](#). (C) Tahzib-Lie explained that the Dutch see the December 15 elections in Iraq as the "final piece in the political process." While they point with pride to the EU's thirty million euro contribution to the electoral process, the Dutch do not support the provision of EU election monitors. The Dutch will, however, facilitate voting for Iraqis in the Netherlands and have recently kicked off management courses in Rijswijk for Iraqi prison wardens and police directors.

[15](#). (C) Dutch concern regarding Iran's nuclear program continues. Oldenburg explained that, as the IAEA Board meeting approaches, the Dutch will play their part in urging Iran to comply with IAEA investigations and promoting reopening of negotiations with Europe. In the event that IAEA efforts fail, the Dutch support referral of the issue to the Security Council. Tahzib-Lie stressed, however, that the Dutch see this as a last-resort option.

[16](#). (C) The Dutch expect the GAERC to address Iran's human rights record and its relationship with the EU. Oldenburg said that the GAERC will send a message that "it's now up to Iran to show they are serious" about EU relations.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

[17](#). (C) The Dutch are very pleased with the Rafah border control agreement. Tahzib-Lie praised the agreement as "historic" and "of great political and economic importance." The Dutch expect the EU to take a third-party role in the implementation of the agreement.

[18](#). (C) The Dutch are considering how best to contribute to the peace process. Tahzib-Lie explained that they are weighing the option of donating personnel to Italy's police mission against contributing funds to support the initiative.

[19](#). (C) The Dutch plan to send election observers to the Palestinian multiparty elections.

BOSNIA/KOSOVO

110. (C) The Dutch expect Balkans-related discussion at the GAERC to focus primarily on Bosnia. Tahzib-Lie anticipated the dialogue to include the agreement on police reform, which she explained "paved the way" for opening of negotiations on the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA).

111. (C) The Dutch are enthusiastic with the prospect of opening negotiations, but are wary of doing so at the expense of continuing cooperation with the ICTY. Tahzib-Lie underscored that the Dutch will deliver a message to the GAERC that continuing Bosnian cooperation with the Tribunal is crucial to accession considerations.

112. (C) The Dutch expect the GAERC to agree to strengthen High Representative Ashdown's role, giving him a larger coordinating role in activities.

113. (C) Tahzib-Lie surmised that agreements for EUPM and EUFOR may emerge from the upcoming GAERC. In addition, considering the end of the Proxima police mission in December, Tahzib-Lie predicted the GAERC will decide to deploy a temporary force until the new force takes hold.

WTO

114. (C) The Dutch are prepared to advocate aggressively for a favorable result in Hong Kong, but are "not too optimistic," explained Tahzib-Lie. The Dutch are particularly suspicious that "last minute difficulties" will impede a collective decision; Tahzib-Lie noted that any EU member state can call a Council meeting at the eleventh hour, even while in Hong Kong. Tahzib-Lie refrained from identifying any specific state, but underscored her fear about such a possibility. (Additional reporting on Dutch WTO views will be provided septel.)

IMMIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT -----

115. (C) Oldenburg lamented that the EU is "impotent" to affect the "negative inflow" of immigrants. The Dutch see the upcoming EUROMED summit in Barcelona on November 27 and 28 as a good forum to continue discussion on this issue. Oldenburg explained that preparatory documents for the Summit are still "very much under discussion." The Dutch foresee a five-year workplan that would highlight political-security partnerships with source countries, durable economic and social reform in source countries, education, and coordination of justice and home affairs efforts with regard to immigration.

116. (C) Oldenburg explained that, for their part, the Dutch are "not afraid" to urge source countries to adopt good governance practices and social and economic reforms. Oldenburg said the Dutch believe such measures are "essential to stem the tide of immigration."

117. (C) Oldenburg explained that the discussion on EU development policy will focus on the division of labor between the European Commission and the EU member states. The Dutch are particularly concerned with the efficacy of EU development assistance; Development Minister van Ardenne, Oldenburg explained, is at the forefront of the debate on coordination -- and delegation -- of work between the EU and its constituent states. Van Ardenne favors close coordination and harmonization of tasks.

BLAKEMAN